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Operation Season's Greetings 2004

AFRC Band performs with Blues Traveler and the Patriots' Cheerleaders



By 1st Lt. Allison Farabaugh
Staff Officer

In its ninth year, Operation Season's Greetings 2004 again featured members from the Band of the Air Force Reserve, the United States Air Forces in Europe Band and the World Champion New England Patriot's cheerleaders with resounding success. New to this year's tour was the platinum selling group Blues Traveler, led by John Popper wailing on the harmonica.

"We performed on this tour to show our appreciation for the troops and family members stationed overseas," said Popper. "We wanted them to know that Americans at home support them and wish them a happy holiday season."

Operation Season's Greetings is a joint venture between Air Force Reserve Command and United States Air Forces in Europe. Employing both people and assets from the two commands, the tour covered about 15,000 miles and visited seven locations including Lajes Field, Portugal, Ramstein Air Base, Germany and Naval Air Station Keflavik, Iceland. Gen. Robert "Doc" Foglesong hosts this tour each year as a way to increase troop morale and bring American culture closer to them.

Photos by Staff Sgt. Ryan Miles

Singer John Popper performs for troops overseas.

"The musicians, audience members and the behind-the-scenes people were spectacular," said Capt. Chad Steffey, commander of the AFRC Band. "The show was on par with a professional concert as seen in the states; the Air Force team was magnificent."

The cheerleaders brought added energy both on-stage and off. They participated in many events for troops around base to include cheering for a Patriots Game at the RAF Mildenhall enlisted club.

"It was great to interact with the troops, hear their stories and tell them firsthand that Americans support them," said Alison Preston of the New England Patriots' cheerleaders.

"This year's tour was a huge success," said Mr. David Ballengee, Operation Season's Greetings producer. "I produced all nine of the Season's Greetings tours and each year they get better and better."



Senior Airman Angie Long in costume with the combined Air Force Bands during Operation Season's Greetings.

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BQ Completes Most Ambitious Two Months in History

By Staff Sgt. Michael Andrew
Non-Commissioned Officer In Charge of Brass Quintet



Photos provided by Staff Sgt. Mike Andrew

Members of the BQ conducting a master class in Pittsburgh area.

The time from Sep 20 to Nov 9, 2004 “was the busiest in Brass Quintet recent history and that’s saying a lot seeing I have been with the group for nearly six years,” recalls Staff Sgt. Michael Andrew, the NCOIC of the Band of the U.S. Air Force Reserve Brass Quintet. The “BQ”, as it is commonly referred to by the band members, finished a 5-day tour, two nine day strike packages, participated in the Brass Chamber Music Forum, along with several individual concert and ceremonial performances. What that adds up to is 33 of 52 days on the road with a grand total of 36 performances. “It’s amazing to think that we spent that much time together. I think you have to have very strong camaraderie among the group members to survive such a long stretch,” commented Senior Airman Mike Richter, one of the BQ trumpet players.

First, the Brass Quintet tour in September featured the group’s recital program. “The recital show is made up of the most difficult brass quintet literature, usually intended for formal concerts in concert halls and music schools,” explained trombone and euphonium player Staff Sgt. John Caputo. During the tour the BQ played at some of the most prominent universities in the Southeast United States including Georgia State, Auburn State, Mississippi State, Southern Mississippi State, Alabama State, and Columbus State Universities.

The next major event was the Pittsburgh strike package. The BQ, along with select personnel, left in advance of the majority of the band to perform public affairs spots on local Pittsburgh radio stations. All told, the BQ performed 12 concerts. Three members of the quintet have ties to the city of Pittsburgh. John Caputo, Mike Richter, and Tom Salyers all graduated from the prestigious Duquesne University School of Music. “It’s nice to go back home and play for family and friends. We don’t often get to do this in the course of our normal duties,” commented trumpet player Senior Airman Tom Salyers, who also grew up in the Pittsburgh area.

Three days after the strike package it was “on the road again,” this time with the concert band, performing at Air Command and Staff College’s “Gathering of Eagles.” The very next day the BQ was in the van traveling to Boone, N.C. for the Brass Chamber Music Forum at Appalachian State University. The four day conference featured the American, New York, Annapolis Brass Quintets, Bay Street Brass Works, and outstanding figures in brass chamber music such as Eric Ewazen and Gunther Schuller. The Air Force Reserve Brass Quintet was featured on two separate occasions during the forum, playing David Maslanka’s “Arise” and Anthony Plog’s “Four Sketches.” Their performances of these works garnered critical acclaim from artists such as Allan Dean, David Wakefield, and Eric Ewazen who wrote, “...they had an absolutely beautiful blend and balance combined with a really impressive technique and musicality.”

After the end of the forum the BQ quickly found themselves performing at the Hill AFB strike package in Utah. The BQ performed in various locals and programs, including their Educational, Patriotic, Recital, and Variety Shows. The members of the group also conducted master classes for several schools. In addition to the BQ performances, the group performed with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir as members the concert band. Former New York Brass Quintet member, and current St. Louis Brass Quintet member Allen Dean summarized the BQ the best saying, “They’re a terrific bunch of guys and excellent musicians as well. I hope our paths cross again soon.”



Brass Quintet performs recital at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Band Performs with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir

By Airman 1st Class Andrew Minns
Guitarist and Public Affairs Representative

The Band of the United States Air Force Reserve recently completed two strike packages just two weeks apart. The first of which led them to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania for a series of performances in support of the 911th Airlift Wing. From October 9th through the 14th, these performances took them all over the Southwest quadrant of the Keystone State and into West Virginia. This gave a valuable opportunity for the 911th to thank the residents of the local area for all of their support over the years, and to educate the younger audience members about the incredible opportunities that lie within the Air Force Reserve.

The band held its first performance at the Soldiers and Sailors Auditorium. The following day the band split up into individual small groups (Southern Aire, Full Spectrum, The Blue-Notes, Brass Quintet, and Woodwind Quintet). During the next



Photo by Airman 1st Class Andrew Minns

The Band of the United States Air Force Reserve Concert Band and Pipe Band conducted by Capt. Chad A. Steffey, perform with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

few days the small groups held over 30 performances for audiences of all ages in the surrounding area. This included local elementary, junior high and high schools, universities and performances in local concert halls and theaters. As always, all performances were free to the public and open to anyone.

After a short time back home, the band hit the road again for Salt Lake City, Utah in support of 419th Fighter Wing. From November 1st through the 9th the tour covered most of the Great Salt Lake area. After more than thirty performances, the strike package finished up at the amazing Mormon Tabernacle. There the Concert Band joined 360 choir members and performed for a live audience of more than 2,000. The performance aired on national television November 7, 2004 for an audience of over fifteen million.

When asked to comment on the experience, band manager Senior Master Sgt. John Cornacchione explained, "There are times in a musician's life that the performance synergy brings forth a very moving, glorious emotional experience. The performance with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir was one such moment where the heart, mind and soul, individually and collectively, was focused to achieve such an experience. The professionalism of Mormon Tabernacle's video and audio production team was beyond what I've ever witnessed. What they produced live would have taken other production companies many hours over several days to produce, along with lots back room editing. For members of the Band of the USAF Reserve, this was truly a once in a lifetime opportunity and an experience they will never forget."



Photo by Ken Hackman

Left to Right: Tech. Sgt. Jeff Bare, Master Sgt. Scott Gunn, and Tech. Sgt. Janis Thrift perform "Highland Cathedral."



Band of the U.S. Air Force Reserve Summer Concert Series

**By Senior Airman Carolyn Dempsey
Flutist and Public Affairs Representative**



Archive Photo

Southern Aire performs at the Museum of Aviation.

In September 2004, The Band of the U.S. Air Force Reserve offered a free concert series to the public at the Museum of Aviation Amphitheater in Warner Robins, Ga. Each Tuesday night during the month, one of the band's ensembles played for appreciative crowds during sundown. The concert series gave the band a rare opportunity to play for friends, family and neighbors, after a busy touring schedule supporting the mission of the Air Force Reserve.

Although delayed due to Hurricane Frances, the series kicked off on September 14 with a joint concert by two of the band's small groups. The evening began with entertainment by The BlueNotes, a nine-piece ensemble featuring a blend of jazz and blues with a touch of Latin spice, and merging traditional swing with today's rock. As the sun set, Southern Aire took the stage and delighted the audience with their driving Celtic rock tunes. The six-member ensemble fuses the traditional highland bagpipes with guitar,

bass guitar, drums, keyboard and vocals.

The following week showcased the band's popular music group, Reserve Generation. Playing hits from the 1960s to today, the six-piece ensemble inspired many audience members to get on their feet and dance. Reserve Generation is also well-known for its "Drug-Free" concerts for middle school students which provide a positive message for children through high-energy shows that incorporate lights, sound and audience interaction.

Noted for its distinctive sound and entertaining blend of musical styles, Full Spectrum concluded the September Concert Series on September 28. Composed of twelve talented musicians, this group grooved to charts from Glenn Miller to contemporary jazz artists.

"While we spend most of the year 'on the road,' it's always a great pleasure to perform for our friends and family here in Middle Georgia. The Museum of Aviation personifies the strong partnership with our community, and as a showcase of our Air Force heritage it was the perfect setting to feature all the performing ensembles of the U.S. Air Force Reserve Band," remarked Capt. Chad A. Steffey, commander of the Band of the U.S. Air Force Reserve.



The mission of the Band of the United States Air Force Reserve is to provide musical support for Air Force and Air Force Reserve recruiting programs; official military functions and ceremonies; troop morale, esprit de corps, and personnel retention at Air Force installations; and Air Force and Department of Defense (DoD) community relations programs.

For more information about the Band of the United States Air Force Reserve, log on to: **www.afrc.af.mil/hq/band**, or call **(478) 327-0555**

For information on the Air Force Reserve, log on to: **www.afreserve.com**, or call **(800) 257-1212**

A Message from the Commander

From the Commander– April 2005



Official Photo

Capt. Chad A. Steffey, Commander and Conductor, Band of the United States Air Force Reserve.

to strengthen our community and nurture the human spirit. As you'll read in this issue, from a Veteran's Day television broadcast with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir to "Operations Season's Greetings," which included a visit to Landstuhl Army Medical Center to visit wounded troops from Iraq, and many other Air Force Reserve events, the men and women of the Band of the Air Force Reserve go "Above and Beyond" to serve our troops and our nation around the World. I'm grateful for their dedication, professionalism and tireless pursuit of excel-

"Don't just play the notes on the page!" Who among us hasn't heard this cliché admonition from a teacher or conductor at sometime in our musical life? Usually the implication is that we're not giving enough attention to the expressive qualities of the music, or more seriously, may be doing the composer a disservice. No matter, it's that ultimately the pursuit of music is not just one of "craft," or even "art." Music touches the soul, evokes the human experience and strengthens community. I remind the band often, "The pursuit of music is a human pursuit ... more than anything else, we're in the people business; music is just the way we go about it."

Over the past several months we've had many privileged opportunities

Key Personnel

**Commander,
Air Force Reserve Command
Lt. Gen. John Bradley**

**Vice Commander,
Air Force Reserve Command
Maj. Gen. David Tanzi**

**Assistant Vice Commander,
Air Force Reserve Command
Brig. Gen. Robert Lytle**

**Commander and Conductor,
Band of the U. S. Air Force Reserve
Capt. Chad Steffey**

**Deputy Director for Operations,
Productions and Publicity
Mr. David Ballengee**

**Staff Officer
1st Lt. Allison Farabaugh**

**Band Manger
Senior Master Sgt.
John Cornacchione**

**First Sergeant
Master Sgt. Scott Gunn**

**Director of Operations
Tech. Sgt. Ken Trimmins**

**Non-Commissioned Officer In
Charge of Public Affairs
Tech. Sgt. Jessica Welles**

**Assistant Editor and Graphic
Design
Airman 1st Class Andrew Minns**

Vacancies

Keyboard

*Jazz Trumpet
(with technical training)*

Clarinet

Guitar (Jazz Emphasis)

*For audition information Contact Staff Sgt. Marcel Marchetti
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